

Addendum

T-512

W. A. Johns (Poquoson-style log canoe)

According to Pete Leshner of the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, the log canoe W. A. JOHNS was deaccessioned and has been permanently transferred to the Deltaville Maritime Museum in Deltaville, VA.

5-06 JLO

T-512

W.A. JOHNS (Poquoson-style log canoe)

St. Michaels, Maryland

W.A. JOHNS is a 5-log Poquoson-style canoe, believed to have been built in Deltaville, Virginia around 1870, although subsequently altered for power and restored in the early 1970s as a modern cruising sailboat. She measures 35' long overall, with 24.6' length on deck, a beam of 8', and a midships depth of 1.8'. The vessel was donated to the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum in 1973, where it awaits restoration. W.A. JOHNS is of great significance as being a rare surviving example of a very early Poquoson-style canoe, indigenous to the Western Shore of the lower Chesapeake, near Poquoson, Virginia. She is also of interest as being an example of a working log canoe altered for power soon after the advent of the gasoline engine, a common practice on the Chesapeake.

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. T-512

Magi No. 2105125533

DOE ☐ yes ☐ no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic W.A. JOHNS

and/or common Poquoson-style log canoe

2. Location

street & number _____ not for publication ☐

city, town St. Michaels _____ vicinity of _____ congressional district _____

state Maryland _____ county Talbot _____

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum

street & number _____ telephone no.: 745-2916

city, town St. Michaels _____ state and zip code 21663

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. _____ liber _____

street & number _____ folio _____

city, town _____ state _____

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title _____

date _____ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local ☐

depository for survey records _____

city, town _____ state _____

7. Description

Survey No. T-512

Condition

☐ excellent
☐ good
☒ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☐ original site
☐ moved date of move _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

This boat is a 5-log Poquoson-style canoe, believed to have been built in Deltaville, Virginia around 1870, although subsequently altered for power and restored in the early 1970s as a modern cruising sailboat. She measures 35' long overall, with 24.6' length on deck. She has a beam of 8' and a midships depth of 1.8'. The canoe has a longhead bow, a sharp stern, and a rounded chine. Although her rig is now missing, she was re-fitted with a modern cruising rig that replaced a more traditional two-masted rig. A propellor and shaft remain in the stern from her motorized days, although the engine and cabin were removed after the boat was donated to the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum in 1973. The hull, in fair condition, was once painted white.

The W.A. JOHNS is log-built out of 5 pine logs, with 12 sets of half frames and four sets of sawn hanging knees. Three of the aftermost frames are doubled with reinforcing ties to support the engine mount and propellor shaft; the three sets of frames forward of these are also bridged, possibly to support floorboards. The hull was fastened with metal drifts.

In shape, the canoe is double-ended, with a sharp, almost plumb stem and a slightly raking stern with a rudder mounted on it. There is a modified, short longhead at the bow, mounted on a 5'-wide stemhead; the added, scrolled billethead has rotted. The canoe has a rounded chine.

The boat is open, with washboards and a small foredeck; 6" high coamings surround the cockpit. The centerboard trunk is located just aft of the foredeck. There is a foot-wide thwart that serves as a mast-step and is fitted with a metal horse.

Originally, the boat was rigged with two masts, no longer with the boat. The bowsprit is let into a samson post on the foredeck; it is square, chamfered at the edges, and tapers to a round point. The bowsprit is set up with a chain bobstay and two cable bowsprit shrouds, along with two short wooden headrails. In addition to her sail rig, the canoe was powered by a 7 H.P. Wisconsin engine, which was removed in 1973.

The hull is painted white with brown trim on the sheer, rub rails, and cap at the coaming. The interior logs were left mostly bare, although some gray paint was used on the interior. The longhead is decorated with trailboards, not original to the boat, which are carved with the name W.A. JOHNS in relief letters painted black on a light green ground, with melon-colored oak leaves also carved in relief, as well as an eagle with a red-white-and-blue shield, carrying arrows, and a blue banner with the initials CBMM [for Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum] in white. There is red trim around the trailboards, which also display the initials R.W.H.

The canoe had been restored by William Allen Johns, Jr. and was given to the museum in his memory.

8. Significance

Survey No. T-512

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates c. 1870 Builder/Architect Unknown

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D
and/orApplicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ GLevel of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☐ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

This vessel is significant as being a rare survival of a very early Poquoson-type of log canoe, indigenous to the Western Shore of the lower Chesapeake, near Poquoson, Virginia. She was built c. 1870, probably in Deltaville, Virginia. She was built as a working canoe with the typical Poquoson-style single sprit-rigged mast but was altered for power at some point in her career, probably in the early years of this century, when the gasoline engine first became available for ordinary use. The canoe thus provides a good example of the quite common practice of altering the early sailing canoes to power so as to make them more efficient as oyster-tonging vessels. These converted sailing canoes were the first power boats on Chesapeake Bay. The vessel was restored to sailing condition in the early 1970's, although not in traditional Poquoson-workboat style, but rather as a pleasure sailing craft.

W.A. JOHNS is of great interest as being one of the oldest surviving examples of a Poquoson-style log canoe. The vessel is also of interest as an educational tool because the 5-log construction of the hull is still quite visible under the layers of white paint.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. T-512

Marion V. Brewington, Chesapeake Bay Log Canoes and Bugeyes (Cambridge, Md: Cornell Maritime Press, 1963)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

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Verbal boundary description and justification _____

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title M.E. Hayward/Anne Witty

organization Maryland Historical Society

date 5/84

street & number 201 W. Monument St.

telephone 685-3750

city or town Baltimore

state Maryland 21201

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438



259 -6

T-512

W.A. JOHNS
St. Michaels, MD

port bow
M.C. Woottoon 10/83



259-1

T-512

W.A. JOHNS

St. Michaels, MD

port stern

M.C. Wootton 10/83



259-11

T-512

W.A. JOHNS
St. Michaels, MD

interior hull
M.C. Wootton 10/83